# RITTENHOUSE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

-November 15, 1960-

The first meeting of the Rittenhouse Society was held August 26, 1960 at the American Numismatic Association convention in the Statler-Hilton Hotel in Boston Massachusetts. Present at this organizational meeting were:

Q. David Bowers
Binghamton, N.Y.

Walter H. Breen
New York, N.Y.

Kenneth Bressett
Racine,Wisconsin

Grover C. Criswell
St.Petersburg Beach,Fla.

Dr. George Fuld
Baltimore, Md.

D. Wayne Johnson
Sidney, Ohio

Kenneth W. Rendell
Medford, Mass.

At the meeting Walter Breen presented the "charter" originally proposed for the Rittenhouse Society several years ago. This contained several suggestions for the society's name, including the adopted Rittenhouse Society. After reviewing other proposals in the old charter the members decided that many of the idea (age requirements for members, for example) were obsolete and needed revision.

A slate of officers for 1960-1961 was nominated and voted on. Elected were: Q. David Bowers, president; Walter H. Breen, vice president and D. Wayne Johnson secretary-treasurer. All of the members present contributed $1.00 each to give the treasury a beginning.

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Before we convene again it would be advantageous to have some of the groundwork completed. A number of the ideas, requirements and policies already discussed or to be decided upon are enumerated below. Sometime during the next month take an hour or so and write your comments and suggestions for each of the items listed. Also mention any new ideas or suggestions that have been overlooked. Mail your comments to: Q. David Bowers; c/o Bowers Coin Co.,Inc.; 70 Court St.; Binghamton, N.Y. The combined results of all the comments received will be then printed and distributed to the members for voting or further discussion.

1. Purpose of the Rittenhouse Society - It was agreed that the general purpos of the R.S. is to be the encouragement and recognition of numismatic research an knowledge.

2. Membership age requirements - Should a limitation be placed on age? Previously discussed were the possibilities that the age be limited to 30, 35 or 40 years with an honorary membership for older persons. It was noted that such requirements would exclude a number of qualified and worthy people from membership. What about active R.S. members as they cross the age barrier?

3. Admission requirements - What should the admission requirements be? Intense and knowledgeable interest in numismatics? The publication of numismatic articles and books? This is one of our most important problems.

4. Method of admission - Should admission or consideration be by application or by invitation? Should the R.S. be an honorary society or should it assume a more active status.

5. Size of membership - Should the membership be limited to just a few members or should it comprise possibly one hundred or more members? How should membership inquiries be processed? Your president has received two or three inquiries from various people inquiring about the R.S. Other members report that they also have been asked about the R.S.

6. Meeting dates - One meeting will be held annually at the convention of the American Numismatic Association. At this, the main meeting, the election of officers will take place. There are a number of possibilities for additional meetings e.g. conventions of M.A.N.A., N.E.N.A. or C.S.N.S. When would you be available for additional meetings? What constitutes a quorum for an official meeting?

7. Emblems, cards, etc. - Should the R.S. have a seal or insignia? If so, how can it be made relevant to Dr. David Rittenhouse or the first U.S. mint? Did Dr. Rittenhouse have a distinctive crest or bookplate that could furnish some suggestions?..... D. Wayne Johnson agreed to furnish R.S. members with pocket identification cards.

8. Should the R.S. publish? - Should the R.S. undertake to publish research works and articles of its members? If so, how would such publications be financed and distributed? The American Numismatic Society presently publishes monographs of members. Should we follow their example? A number of persons have expressed dissatisfaction with the A.N.S. format....Speaking of the A.N.S., would the A.N.S. be displeased with the R.S.'s somewhat similar purposes? How would the R.S. differ from the A.N.S.?

9. Initiation fees - It has been suggested that an initiation fee of $25 to $100 be charged new members. These amounts are similar to initiation fees charged by other groups and societies of similar composition. If the public image of the R.S. were satisfactory, membership would be regarded as an honor and a distinction and the initiation fee would not be an objection. What do you think?

10. Dues - Yearly dues should be collected from all members to finance correspondence, stationery, etc. An amount of $2 to $5 per year would seem to be reasonable. Extra expenses at the beginning could be financed by donations or assessments. The paying of yearly dues by members would keep us posted on which members were still interested in the R.S. Inactive or disinterested members would be dropped for non-payment of dues.

11. Awards - The presentation of a Rittenhouse Society Award at the annual A.N.A. convention was discussed and met with approval. Such award would be made to the convention exhibit displaying the most research or the most scientific presentation. Perhaps awards should be made also to the article and book of the year displaying the most original research.

12. Scope of R.S. interests - Should the R.S. be limited to those interested in American material...U.S. coins, tokens, paper money, colonials, etc.? Should Canadian be included?

*** These are just a few of the things needing discussion. You will undoubtedly think of many more. Write your suggestions at your earliest convenience. Let's fully activate the Rittenhouse Society.